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SUBJECT: MILITARY OPERATIONS AND HUMANITARIAN SITUATION
UPDATE JUNE 2

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 1194
[B](#). ISLAMABAD 1184
[C](#). ISLAMABAD 1169

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: President Asif Zardari met June 2 with political, military and law enforcement chiefs for Pakistan's four provinces to discuss overall security in the country. Each province is slated to stand up anti-terrorist units. The curfew has been lifted in some of Swat district's main cities/towns. Security forces launched operations in two remaining militant strongholds. In a recent meeting convened by the Mansehra District Coordination Officer, NGOs working in Mansehra were alerted to an impending possible displacement of 20,000 people from Shangla due to possible military operations. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is likely to issue by June 5 a preliminary appeal for funding for at least \$40 million, which will almost double its program in Pakistan. End summary.

The Political Front
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[1](#)2. (U) President Asif Zardari chaired a high-level meeting in Islamabad on June 1 to review the overall security situation in the country (ref A). The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Yousuf Gilani, other key Federal Ministers, Chief of Army Staff Ashfaq Kayani, Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Ahmed Shuja Pasha, as well as the provincial Chief Ministers, Police Inspector Generals, and the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) Governor. It was decided that 25,000-strong anti-terrorist units would be raised for each province irrespective of the size or population of the province. It was also decided that security scanners would be placed at entry points of major cities.

[1](#)3. (U) Allocation of resources to provinces for maintenance of law and order was also reportedly discussed. The NWFP separately demanded special allocations from the federal government, arguing the province has suffered disproportionately. The demand was made by NWFP Information Minister Mian Iftikhar Hussain during a media briefing following the Zardari meeting.

[1](#)4. (U) Meanwhile, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) leadership has called on the GOP to end the military operation in Swat by June 10 or face nationwide agitation.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Infighting between district nazims (mayors) and GOP civil servants may explain some statements in the press that the humanitarian need is greater than that which humanitarian

organizations and USG personnel have witnessed.

In NWFP

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¶16. (U) On June 1, the military lifted the daytime curfew for Swat's main towns of Bahrain, Madyan, Fetehtpur, Khwazakhela, Matta and Alpurai, as well as for the Shangla district. NWFP Health Director General Fazle Masood ordered doctors and medical staff in Swat to report for duty immediately.

¶17. (U) Also in Swat, security forces launched operations in two remaining militant strongholds -- Charbagh tehsil, 20 kilometers from Mingora, and Peochar valley. (Note: A "tehsil" is an administrative unit smaller than a district.) Security forces claimed to have killed 18 militants and arrested another 13, while thousands of Charbagh residents fled the fighting. The Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Major General Athar Abbas acknowledged that no top militant commanders had been killed or captured and that a number of militants had escaped from Swat "to fight another day."

¶18. (SBU) A contact who returned to Mingora over the weekend of May 30 told Consulate Peshawar that shops were open and civilians were walking openly in the streets, which are heavily patrolled by Pakistani military and police. He had heard anecdotal reports from residents about significant civilian casualties. He noted the damage to the physical infrastructure of Mingora was significant and there was considerable resentment directed toward the Pakistani

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military by the residents of Mingora who had not evacuated. In addition to their anger over civilian casualties, many had been without food for up to five days due to the curfew and ongoing military operations.

¶19. (U) Though Pakistani military operations continued in the Pir Baba area of northern Buner over June 1-2, NWFP Information Minister Iftikhar Hussain stated on June 1 that Buner District was almost "completely clear" and ready for the return of displaced persons (IDPs). Hussain claimed the provincial government had contacted 40 percent of Buner's government workers; they were expected to return to duty within the next few days. Buner's District Police Officer (DPO) dismissed about 160 policemen, including a sub-inspector and three assistant sub-inspectors, for not complying with such directives and for absence from duty.

¶10. (U) In a probable indication of the imminent start of military operations, on June 2, a curfew was announced via television news for Shangla district.

Humanitarian Situation

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¶11. (SBU) Post has heard unconfirmed rumors the new GOP estimate for the total number of IDPs may be released as early as June 3, with figures decreasing to as low as 1.7 million.

¶12. (SBU) NGOs reported that IDPs are currently undecided as to whether to return to the Swat Valley. Reportedly, some male heads of household are returning to assess damage to family residences. To date, EmbOffs have made more than 73 visits to 25 formal and informal IDP camps and communities. In an NGO focus group with female IDPs in southern Buner district, NWFP, participants indicated that the primary needs were food, safe drinking water, health services, and a safe environment for returning. The IDP women expressed particular concern regarding lack of food because the nearest UN World Food Program (WFP) distribution point was approximately 16 kilometers from the village.

¶13. (SBU) The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs (OCHA) is augmenting information management capacity with three additional staff arriving this week to work on humanitarian mapping. OCHA will meet with all U.N. cluster heads on June 3 to discuss improving information management. OCHA is also launching a website that will include key documents and cluster updates.

¶14. (SBU) Through the end of May 2009, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) had delivered the following USG-funded non-food items for IDPs to the UNHCR warehouse in Nowshera: 400 tents, 21,780 fleece blankets, 48,907 quilts, 57,500 sleeping mats, 15,372 ten-liter water containers, 14,040 mosquito nets, 31,540 twenty-liter plastic buckets, 11,900 kitchen sets, and 10,300 packages of soap.

¶15. (SBU) The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is likely to issue by June 5 a preliminary appeal for funding for at least \$40 million, which will almost double its program in Pakistan. The primary focus of the expanded program will be delivery of relief assistance wherever the need is greatest in Malakand, Buner, and Mardan districts of NWFP. ICRC will also increase its presence in Swat district and is gearing up to assist IDPs from Waziristan, FATA. According to an ICRC representative speaking to RefCoor June 2, the organization's intention is to provide a massive relief response, coordinated with other humanitarian assistance providers, over a limited time period (septel).

¶16. (SBU) In a recent meeting convened by the Mansehra District Coordination Officer, NGOs working in Mansehra were alerted to an impending possible displacement of 20,000 people from Shangla due to military operations. According to an NGO present, the district authorities proposed two sites for establishment of IDP camps -- at Chattar Class, 30 kilometers north of the city, and at Jabba, some 15 kilometers east of Mansehra. Despite this initial request, the GOP subsequently decided to bring people out from Shangla through Mingora, then Lower Dir and Malakand, to Charsadda; the District Relief Commissioner provided transport to 400

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families on June 1. UNHCR indicated there are currently about 500 families in the Charsadda camp, which is full, but another 500 families can be accommodated in the sugar mill at Charsadda, and others thereafter in a camp opening June 2 in Peshawar.

Other Areas

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¶17. (U) Pakistan media reports regarding a militant attack on a "NATO truck terminal" at Chaman Pass, Balochistan, turned out to be an attack on seven trucks of a transportation subcontractor to Maersk-Pakistan, one of several contractors which transport U.S. cargo to Afghanistan. The trucks, described as "returning empty from Afghanistan," were set on fire; three were completely destroyed.

¶18. (U) Initial media reports of the kidnapping of over 500 students by the Taliban in North Waziristan, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), also were inaccurate. Instead, approximately 71 students of a Defense Ministry-run, private preparatory school, described as a "privileged boarding school," were briefly held hostage June 1 by unidentified assailants in an apparent ransom scheme, before being rescued the morning of June 2. (Further details reported Peshawar septel.)

PATTERSON